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were presumably given by the leading towing plane. After the gliders had formed a line another white smoke signal was given, whereupon they landed at a steep angle. After circling the airfield the twin-engine planes headed north. The gliders landed immediately after the parachutists had descended, sometimes while these were still aloft. Immediately after the gliders had landed side doors were lowered and a motor vehicle similar to a jeep, in addition to an AT gun, were unloaded, the lowered doors serving as ramps. In addition to the motor vehicle and AT gun each glider was loaded with one driver, a gun crew of three and a chief of section who could be recognized from the map he held in his hand. The AT gun was fitted with pneumatic tires and a long, thin barrel of 46 to 48 mm caliber. The gun had a cylindrical muzzle brake and a split-trail carriage with round trails provided with spade-like spurs. The upper edge of the gun shield was shaped like a heart while the lower edge was straight. On the march and during the air transport half of the shield was folded back. About 2 minutes after the gliders had touched ground the unloaded jeep would leave with its attached AT gun.

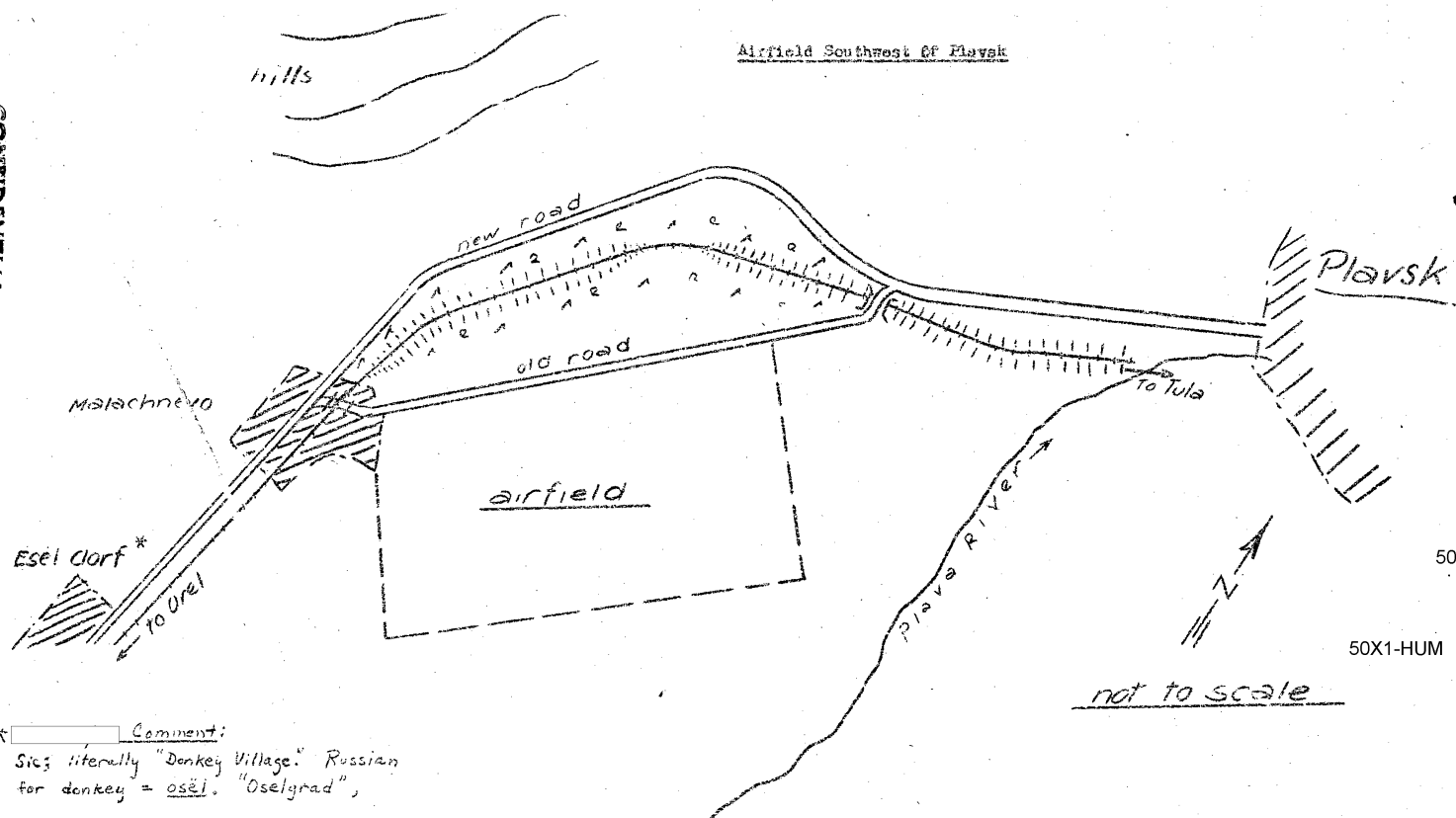
5. The field exercises of the parachute and airborne troops began after July 1949. At first only three transports were employed for the transport of parachutists. Later the number of aircraft and parachutists participating in these exercises increased considerably. Training was most intensive in September 1949. Originally the exercises were held at dawn, later they usually took place between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Night exercises were also observed. On these occasions red and white signal lights were fired over the training area. It could not be observed whether cargo gliders also landed at night. An average one or two exercises were held weekly with one wave of 27 to 30 planes and nine cargo gliders usually participating.
6. A large field exercise was observed in September 1949. It lasted for eight days; four to five waves of aircraft carrying parachutists, and nine gliders participated. A unit estimated to be in regimental strength was bivouacking during this time along the railroad line north of the airfield. The parachutists quickly assembled in squads and then, controlled by umpires, began their combat practice. From 8 to 11 tanks and self-propelled guns also participated in these field exercises, which always seemed to be conducted against a simulated enemy, both sides equipped with guns and mortars. After completion of the exercises the troops left in the direction of Plavsk, where they were seen by source. The parachutists were stationed there.
7. The cargo gliders employed for the air landing exercises looked well constructed. The pilot's seat was lower than the wings, which had slightly swept-back outer sections. The wing tips were rounded; the glider had a round plexiglass nose.
8. The parachutists stationed in Plavsk were quartered in an old four-story red brick barracks installation located on a hill in the southern sector of the town, west of the main street, about 300 meters from the church. The unit was of about regimental strength. A general and a major watching a parachute exercise were seen once in a jeep. [redacted] this general was the commander of the parachute troops. Three jeeps and about 10 trucks were observed with the marching parachute units. The motor vehicles were not marked with any insignia, nor did the soldiers wear branch-of-service insignia. Only a few of them wore leather crash helmets such as were seen at parachute exercises. Source believes that the soldiers wore rose-colored piping. Engineer troops wearing black-bordered epaulets were quartered in about battalion strength in the same barracks as the parachutists.

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Attachment: Sketch of the location of Plavsk airfield.

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Attachment